

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1, 2, 5-9, 15, 18-19, 24, and 26 and amend claims 12, 14, and 20-22 as shown below in the Listing of Claims. This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-11 (canceled)

12. (currently amended) An information processing apparatus for processing original data created by a predetermined author, the apparatus comprising:

inputting means for inputting the original data, original-data assuring information for assuring that the original data is an original, a first piece of modification information that indicates how to modify the original data to obtain modified original data, a sequence of $(n - 1)$ pieces, up to an n th piece, of modification information, where for $(2 \leq k \leq n - 1)$ the k th piece of modification information indicates how to modify the original data already modified in sequence by the first to the $(k - 1)$ th piece of modification information, and n pieces of modification-assuring-information for detecting whether the corresponding modification information has been altered;

original-data verifying means for verifying, by the original-data assuring information, that the original data is assured as being an original;

modification-information verifying means for verifying, by the respective pieces of modification-assuring-information-and-secret information, that the respective pieces of modification information regarding a modification of the original data is assured as not having been altered;

determination means for determining whether the original data and the respective pieces of modification information have been altered; and

modifying means for modifying the original data based on the first to the n th piece of modification information when the determination means determines that none of the first to the n th piece of modification information has been altered, modifying the original data based on the first to the m th piece of modification information when the

determination means determines that none of the original data and the first to the mth piece of modification information has been altered and that an (m + 1)th piece of modification information has been altered, and not modifying the original data when the determination means determines that either the original data or the first piece of modification information has been altered~~-in accordance with the modification information to obtain the modified original data when it is verified that the original data is assured as being an original and the modification information is assured as not having been altered.~~

Claim 13 (canceled)

14. (currently amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the original-data verifying means verifies a digital signature for the original data and the modification-information verifying means verifies a respective digital signature~~-signatures~~ for the respective pieces of modification information.

Claims 15-19 (canceled)

20. (currently amended) An information processing method for processing original data created by a predetermined author, the information processing method comprising:

inputting the original data, original-data assuring information for assuring that the original data is an original, a first piece of modification information that indicates how to modify the original data to obtain modified original data, a sequence of (n - 1) pieces, up to an nth piece, of modification information, where for (2 ≤ k ≤ n - 1) the kth piece of modification information indicates how to modify the original data already modified in sequence by the first to the (k - 1)th piece of modification information, and n pieces of modification-assuring-information for detecting whether ~~the corresponding~~ modification information has been altered;

verifying, by the original-data assuring information, that the original data is assured as being an original;

verifying, by the respective pieces of modification-assuring-information-and secret information, that the respective pieces modification information regarding a modification of the original data is assured as not having been altered;

determining whether the original data and the respective pieces of modification information have been altered; and

modifying the original data based on the first to the nth piece of modification information when the determination means determines that none of the first to the nth piece of modification information has been altered, modifying the original data based on the first to the mth piece of modification information when the determination means determines that none of the original data and the first to the mth piece of modification information has been altered and that an (m + 1)th piece of modification information has been altered, and not modifying the original data when the determination means determines that either the original data or the first piece of modification information has been altered ~~in accordance with the modification information to obtain the modified original data when it is verified that the original data is assured as being an original and the modification information is assured as not having been altered.~~

21. (currently amended) The information processing method according to claim 20, wherein a digital signature for the original data is verified as part of verifying that the original data is assured as being an original and ~~a-respective digital signature~~ signatures for the respective pieces of modification information ~~is-are~~ verified as part of verifying, by the respective pieces of modification-assuring-information, that the respective pieces modification information regarding a modification of the original data is assured as not having been altered ~~that modification information regarding a modification of the original data is assured as being true.~~

22. (currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing a computer program that executes the information processing method according to ~~claim 18~~ claim 20.

Claims 23-24 (canceled)

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the original data is stored in a file having a header, and wherein at least one of the modification information, the modification-assuring-information, and the original-data assuring information is stored in the header.

Claim 26 (canceled)

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the original data is stored in a file having a header, and wherein at least one of the modification information, the modification-assuring-information, and the original-data assuring information is stored in the header.